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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY China

SUBJECT Indications of Mobilization for Korean War/
Attitude of the People Toward the War

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1. In Hsu Chow, one of the chief indications of mobilization for the Korean War we observed was the increased propaganda campaign among the civilian population. There was even more emphasis on the peaceful intentions of the Chinese Communists than previously and more claims that the US was militaristic. As this propaganda program intensified, more and more segments of the population were forced to contribute to it. [REDACTED] was required to make a speech [REDACTED] backing up the Communist Party line. She managed to avoid difficulty with the Communists and still keep her conscience clear by speaking on the general thesis that US mothers were just as anxious to keep out of war as Chinese mothers. In other words, she conformed outwardly to the Communist line that common people in the US did not want war and that the war was only based on the machinations of Wall Street.
2. In 1949 not long after the Communists came into the Hsu Chow area, they initiated a program for enlisting young men into the Chinese Air Force. Many who enlisted did not end up in the air service but merely in the Chinese Army. The pressure of this program on the young men was very heavy although outwardly it was merely an appeal to their patriotism. There were a number of cases of young men who finally succumbed to this pressure and wanted to enlist. Surprisingly enough, however, there were also several cases, where such enlistment would have worked a hardship on the young men's families, in which the mothers of the young men were able to persuade the Communist authorities to release their sons. By and large, however, the students did not trust the promises offered by the Communists and the program was not too successful.

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3. Prior to this, however, the Communists had been very successful in obtaining young men with no particular education from rural areas for infantry duty. I was told that in some parts of Shantung one could hardly see any young men in the villages. Obviously the reaction of the inhabitants of such villages was very bitter since the loss of the services of the young men meant a radical depletion of the labor force and it was not possible to run the farms.

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4. As I have said one of the first indications we had of mobilization for the war and the first result of the war itself was the stepping up of the propaganda campaign. The pressure on all parts of Chinese society was great and all parts of the society were continually faced with the question "What are you doing for the war effort?" Obviously the answer to this question was a very delicate matter for Christians because of the very peculiar position they were in under the Communist regime. There was no regulation prohibiting the existence of Christian churches but every attempt was made to discredit them. The best proof I have of this [redacted] was the story told me [redacted] during the summer of 1950. At this time he had occasion to take a train trip and found himself in the same car with a group of young Chinese who, it appeared from their conversation, were returning from a school for Communist political administrators. They were discussing the various points they had been taught in the school and were obviously unaware that my friend was a Christian. He was very interested to hear them say, when the discussion came to what the attitude of a political administrator should be toward Christians, that the official doctrine was "never obviously use force against Christians but wait until the Christians themselves take some position which can be interpreted as illegal or unpatriotic." In order to avoid the charge of being unpatriotic, Christian churches had to take some action in support of the war effort and to do this and still retain their spiritual integrity was, of course, a very difficult job. In addition to the pressure of this sort there was also continuing pressure during the war for financial contributions to the war effort.

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5. At the time the Korean War broke out we were receiving in Hsu Chow the Shanghai Daily News, an English-language newspaper published in Shanghai. On the day after the war started this paper carried a news service report datelined Tokyo to the effect that the North Koreans had attacked the South Koreans whereas the Chinese Communist papers had claimed the opposite.

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[redacted] We mentioned what we had read in the Shanghai paper and they said that they had not actually believed the Chinese Communist accounts of the attack and were glad to have their opinions confirmed. Leaving political consideration out of it, it was, of course, very difficult for intelligent people to believe that the South Koreans had attacked the North Koreans when the war was being fought in South Korea. Obviously, however, this disbelief of the Communist interpretation of the attack was politically very unhealthy and few people discussed it for fear of reprisal. Educated people in China have an unusual amount of common sense, however, and I believe that very few were convinced by the Communist press.

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6. As the war went on, [redacted] any of the people [redacted] were for the war with the possible exception of the Communist soldiers themselves who of course recited the propaganda line. Surprisingly enough, however, they were quite soft in their dealings with the people. This in itself was a kind of propaganda aimed at gaining the support of people who had previously been victimized by the Chinese Nationalist soldiers. The Communist soldiers

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claimed "We haven't even taken a needle from the people." A common reaction to this statement, however, was "No, they don't take needles because they are not worth taking." The Communist soldiers were, however, quite pleasant and did attempt to ingratiate themselves with the people with whom they were billeted. The result was that the people said that the soldiers weren't so bad but only the politicians who came later. I think that it would be safe to say that although they didn't like some of the things that the Nationalists did they feared the Communists more.

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